

9-09 [Vernonia Sign Code]

9-09.01.10 [Vernonia Sign Provisions]

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9-09.01-10 [Purpose]

The purpose of this chapter is to maintain or improve the aesthetic quality of the City's residential and business environment in a manner that recognizes and balances the need for signs with other visual, aesthetic and safety concerns of the community.

Further, the purpose of these regulations are to:

- Protect the health, safety, property and welfare of the public;
- Provide a neat, clean, orderly and attractive appearance of the community;
- Improve the effectiveness of signs;
- Provide for safe construction, location, erection and maintenance of signs;
- Prevent proliferation of signs, sign clutter, minimize adverse visual safety factors to travelers on the public highway and on private areas open to public travel; and
- Achieve these purposes consistent with state and federal constitutional limits on the regulation of speech.

9-09.01-20 [Applicability] All new, altered or remodeled signs within City Zoning districts shall be permitted, provided that they meet all standards and provisions herein, except as otherwise provided in Section 9-09.01-50 Permit Exemptions. Alteration of a sign includes but is not limited to the size, content, shape, method of illumination, position, location, materials or supporting structure of a sign. The permitting process may be administrative or if necessary, reviewed by a hearings body.

14. Internally Illuminated. A sign which is wholly or partially illuminated by an internal light source from which light passes through the display surface to the exterior of the sign. The use of internal illumination is restricted to "indirect halo", "push-through" or other substantially similar illumination techniques. Internally illuminated acrylic faces are prohibited.
15. Logo. Pictures, figures, symbols, letters, sign copy or similar graphic design which advertises or identifies a business, building or use.
16. Monument Sign. A low profile, ground-mounted freestanding sign that is supported by a solid base as an essential element of the design of the sign.
17. Non-conforming Sign. An existing sign, lawful at the time of enactment of these provisions, which does not conform to the requirements of this code.
18. Off-site Sign. A business identification sign occupying space on property which is not the property occupied by the business.
19. Portable Sign. Any sign or other graphic, including A-frame signs, which is designed to be or is capable of being transported from one place to another and not permanently affixed to a structure or building.
20. Projecting Sign. A sign other than wall signs, which are attached to and project from a structure or building face, usually perpendicular to the building face. Also called a blade sign.
21. Roof Sign. A sign located on or above the roof of any building.
22. Shopping Center/Business Complex. A group of three (3) or more commercial retail/industrial businesses which have been designed and developed together as an integral unit on a single parcel of land or separate parcels of land and which businesses utilize common off-street parking or access.
23. Sign. A sign is any structure, device, fixture or placard using graphics, symbols and/or written copy designed specifically for the purpose of advertising or identifying any business occupant, establishment, product, goods or services. However, a sign shall not include the following:
 - a. Flags and insignia of a government, school, religious group, or nonprofit organization.
 - b. Legal notices; identification, information, or directional signs erected by governmental bodies or public utilities.
 - c. A memorial plaque, tablet or cornerstone made an integral and permanent part of the building or structure.
 - d. Signs within a building which cannot be seen from outside the building.
 - e. Holiday decorations.
24. Temporary Sign. A sign which is not permanently affixed. A banner, pennant, poster or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, flags (not including flags of national, state or city governments), plastic, sheet, cardboard, wallboard, sheet metal, plywood or similar materials and intended to be displayed for a limited period of time. Temporary signs do not include portable signs.

- a. Signs shall be constructed of wood, stone, metal or materials promoting a look of such natural materials.
 - b. Use of materials other than wood, stone or metal may be approved by the Planning Director or designee, provided the materials are indistinguishable in appearance from wood, stone or metal.
5. Signing Techniques shall be permitted as follows:
- a. Painting the sign directly on the facade of the building.
 - b. Painting of a sign on a finished material or sign board which is subsequently affixed to the building.
 - c. Affixing raised block letters directly on the facade of the building.
6. Logos may be permitted and shall be considered as part of the allowable sign area.
7. Illumination - no sign shall be erected or maintained which, by use of lights or illumination creates an unduly distracting and hazardous condition to a motorist, pedestrian or the general public. In addition:
- a. Signs may be externally illuminated by flood lights or other lighting approved by the Planning Director or designee, located on wall or roof area adjacent to the sign intended to be illuminated with illumination directed down.
 - b. No external illumination devices shall be allowed to exceed the building height requirements of the underlying zone.
 - c. No light emitting source shall be exposed to direct view from a public street or highway that may be used for indirect light illumination of the display surface of a sign. This means that a person standing at the adjacent property line would not see the light emitting source.
 - d. No sign shall be erected or maintained if it contains, includes or is illuminated by any flashing intermittent, revolving, rotating or moving lights, or which moves or which has animated or moving parts.
 - e. No sign shall be internally illuminated except as described in the definition of an internally illuminated sign in Section 9-09.01-30 and as approved by the City Planner. Also permitted are small neon signs described in 9. f. below, and small business signs exempt from a sign permit described in Section 9-09.01-50 10.
 - f. Two (2) neon window signs per business are allowed provided the maximum size is two hundred eighty (280) square inches per sign.
8. Joint Occupancy or Multiple Uses. The size restrictions set forth herein apply to each building. Where a building is occupied by a single occupant who carries on more than one activity within the building, the occupant must allocate the available ground or wall sign area in any manner between the various activities, but the total area so allocated may not exceed the a maximum area available to that occupant were he/she carrying on only a single activity. In like manner, where a building is occupied by more than one tenant, the owner may allocate available ground or wall sign area among the various tenants, but the total area so allocated may not exceed the maximum area available to a single tenant occupying the entire building.

9-09.01-60 [Prohibited Signs]

A. The following signs are prohibited:

1. Signs that are placed on, affixed to or painted on a motor vehicle or trailer and placed on public or private property for the primary purpose of providing a sign not otherwise permitted by these standards. Signs on vehicles used in the normal course of business shall not be subject to this provision.
2. Signs or sign structures that create a hazard by obstructing clear view of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
3. No sign shall be attached to or placed against a building or other structure in such a manner as to prevent or inhibit ingress or egress through any door or window required or designated for access to any building, nor shall any sign obstruct or be attached to a fire escape.
4. No sign or other graphic display other than a City or other public agency sign shall be allowed to be erected, installed, replaced or maintained in, over or on any public property, including parkways, except as provided in this ordinance.
5. Service signs such as those identifying VISA or MasterCard shall not be attached to an approved sign. If such services are to be advertised, the signs shall be integrated into the overall sign design and are subject to all requirements of these standards.
6. No sign shall have or consist of any moving, rotating or otherwise animated part or any flashing, blinking, fluctuating or otherwise animated light. In addition, no sign shall approximate or resemble in any way an emergency light or sign. The provisions of this subsection shall not be applied so as to prohibit the following types of signs:
 - a. A conventional clock face
 - b. An on-premise traditional , revolving barber pole that is not more than eleven (11) feet above the ground.
7. Signs in right-of-way. Signs shall not be located in or extended onto public rights of way except as otherwise provided in these sign provisions. Traffic control signs and devices installed by the governmental entity responsible for the right-of-way and City signs are exempt from this prohibition.
8. Noise-emitting signs. Signs that emit sounds.
9. Billboards shall not be allowed in the City of Vernonia or the Urban Growth Boundary.
7. Internally illuminated signs are only allowed as described in the definition of an internally illuminated sign per Section 9-09.01-30. Further, small illuminated or neon business signs are permitted in accordance with sections 9-09.01-40 General Provisions and 9-09.01-50 Permit Exemptions.
8. No colored lights shall be used at any location or in any manner so as to be confused with or construed as traffic control devices.
9. Exposed exterior vending machines, such as those used to dispense soft drinks, not including newspaper and magazine stands.

9-09.01-90 [Requirements for Signs by Zone District]

A. The following table indicates the most common allowable signs by zoning district.

Section 9-09 Table 1 Signs Permitted by Zone

	Wall	Project	Flexible	Ground/Monument	Window	Awning	Portable	Home Occupation
LDR	*			*			X	X
R	*			*			X	X
GR	*			*			X	X
DT	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
GC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
LI	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
PR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
IP	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

* Only for Approved Public or Semi-Public uses or a B&B

Billboard signs: not allowed in the City

Off-site signs: only allowed on Hwy 47 per ODOT permit

B. Low Density Residential LDR, General Residential GR, Residential R, Public IP, and Park PR Zones

1. Sign regulations for non-residential uses permitted by a conditional use or other land use permit are as follows:

- a. Public and Semi-public uses such as a church, school, park, civic or similar organization are permitted one thirty-two (32) square foot ground sign with a ground sign having a maximum height of eight (8) square feet. A ground sign for the Vernonia School complex may be a maximum of fifty (50) square feet in size and twenty (20) feet high.
- b. For multi-family developments and mobile home parks containing four or more units there may be one identification sign limited to twenty (20) square feet in area and not exceeding six (6) feet in height located at each entrance to the park or building complex. In addition, at each entrance, there may be an externally lit sign not to exceed fifteen (15) square feet in area containing a map showing the location of individual sites or units.
- c. One on-site temporary subdivision sign not exceeding fifty (50) square feet in area and ten (10) feet in height, provided that such signs shall be removed no later than two (2) years from the recording date of the subdivision or until building permits have been issued on all of the lots, whichever occurs first.
- d. Permanent Subdivision Sign. One ground-mounted sign not to exceed twenty (20) square feet in area and a maximum height of four (4) feet. The subdivision sign shall be permitted at the primary entrance to the subdivision.
- e. Bed & Breakfast Signs. One ground-mounted or monument sign not to exceed four (4) square feet in area and four (4) feet in height is allowed. A projecting sign may be used in place of a ground mounted sign.
- f. Home Occupation Sign. One sign not to exceed four (4) square feet.
- g. Portable signs are permitted in the R, GR and LDR Zones during business hours only, in accordance with the Portable Sign provisions of Section C.1.n. below.

be within ten (10') of any other sign within any street right of way, stop signs, etc.). No more than one (1) monument sign shall be permitted for each lot.

- j. Directory Signs: May be free-standing or affixed to an exterior wall. One per premises. Shall be no larger than 12 square feet in area, with letters no more than 6 inches in height. Shall not exceed 5 feet in height.
- k. Shopping Center/Business Complex Signs. One ground or monument sign indicating the tenants. Plus each business is allowed one wall sign per exterior wall.
- l. Drive-Thru Menu Board Signs. Are not permitted in the front yard setback. Maximum size of 30 square feet and maximum height of 8 feet. Only 2 menu boards for each drive-thru business.
- m. Service Station Price Signs. One price sign per station. Maximum size of 32 square feet and maximum height of 20 feet.
- n. Portable Signs. A portable sign, such as an A-frame or sandwich board sign shall comply with the following standards:
 - (1). Maximum size of 8 square feet and a maximum height of 4 feet.
 - (2). One sign per business is allowed, to be located within 10 feet of the business entrance, or if the sign is off-site, it must be located within 3 blocks of the business.
 - (3). May be displayed only during business hours.
 - (4). Is not permitted to interfere with traffic visibility.

2. Off-Site Signs. The business activity must be located within 3 blocks of the sign. The sign may only occupy space fronting the highway, and must be approved by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

9-09.01-100 Temporary Signs

A. Temporary signs shall comply with the following provisions:

- 1. Temporary Window Signs. Signs placed upon a window opening are permitted when such signs do not obscure more than twenty-five (25) percent of the window area, and are maintained for a period not exceeding ninety (90) days where upon they shall be removed for a minimum period of thirty (30) days. The total area of such temporary window signs, in combination with permanent window signs, shall not exceed 25% of the total window area. Temporary Window Signs are exempt from the sign permit requirement.
- 2. Temporary signs, other than window signs, shall be displayed not more than one week before the start of an event and be removed the day after the event. Exceptions to this time limit are business closure ("Going out of Business") signs, "Coming Soon" and Christmas or seasonal signage which may be displayed for 30 days prior to the start of the event and removed within a week after the event.
- 3. Temporary signs, other than window signs, as defined herein have separate permit procedure. Temporary sign applications shall be made on forms provided by the City. If the sign is not displayed as required by these provisions and not removed the day after the event, City employees or their agents shall remove the sign and the responsible party billed for removal.

1. Wood, stone or iron and their visual equivalent are the recommended materials for both the sign and the stanchion (for ground-mounted or monument signs).
2. Signs shall include white font and a brown background.
3. Individual way-finding signs shall be a maximum of 6" x 30" in size.

F. Sign Types. The design, dimensions and content of each sign are as follows:

1. General Directional Signs

- a. These signs provide general direction to various destinations. These signs do not include specific names. Destinations include City Hall, downtown, parks, lodging, campgrounds and farmer's market.
- b. Location. At key intersections to indicate changes in direction.
- c. Dimensions. Post: Similar to existing sign standards for ground signs with a maximum height of ten (10') feet without the City logo
- d. City logo size: Standard 30" x 30" advisory sign size.

2. Secondary Signs

- a. To provide directional assistance in locating specific tourist-oriented businesses and destinations. The name of the business or destination and an arrow are the only text on the signs. Individual logos shall not be permitted.
- b. Location. Secondary signs would be located within the right-of-way at intersections near to the businesses or destinations that are identified on the way-finding signs.
- c. Dimensions. Post: Similar to existing sign standards for ground mounted signs with a maximum height of ten (10') feet without the City logo.
- d. City logo size: Standard 30"x 30" advisory sign size.

9-09.01-300 [Non-Conforming, Illegal and Abandoned Signs]

A. A non-conforming sign shall not be altered, reconstructed, replaced, relocated or expanded in any manner unless it is made to conform with the provisions of this section, except as follows:

1. Other nonconforming signs on the same property need not be made to conform as a result.
2. The changing of the advertising or message on an approved painted or printed sign or signs specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy, including changing the name of the business of the use advertised under the current owner (e.g. changing "Shell" to "76" gas). However, change in copy shall be permitted only if no structural changes in the sign are necessary, except that no change in copy shall be permitted for non-conforming wall signs.
3. Ordinary maintenance and minor repairs, including that which are required for safety purposes shall be permitted. Structural alterations to the non-conforming sign are prohibited unless they are made to conform to all requirements of the City Code.

B. If the use identified by a non-conforming sign is abandoned (see definition) for a period of not less than ninety (90) days, the sign shall be removed unless it is made to conform to the provisions of this section. If such sign is not made to conform or if it is not removed within one hundred twenty (120) days from the time the use is abandoned, it shall thereafter be unlawful.

2. The design is proportional to the building and location, is consistent with the request and will not be injurious to the neighborhood in which the property is located or to property established to be affected by the request; and
3. The request is the minimum variance necessary to provide reasonable signage for the property affected.